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be held more blamable by reason of our better realization of the remedies available.

THEO. B. COMSTOCK

LOS ANGELES, CAL.,
October 15, 1909

INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: In SCIENCE for October 22 Mr. J. D. Hailman has set forth with admirable clearness some of the reasons why scientists should adopt an artificial international language. Your readers will be interested to know that the whole question has recently been thoroughly discussed in a book called "Weltsprache und Wissenschaft," published by Fischer in Jena. This book, which is in itself an interesting sign of the internationality of present-day science, written as it is by five university professors belonging to five different countries: Couturat (France), Jespersen (Denmark), Lorenz (Switzerland), Ostwald (Germany) and Pfaundler (Austria), contains also an account of the most recent development of the international language movement, with which Mr. Hailman does not seem to be familiar and which you will therefore allow me to sum up here.

In October, 1907, an international scientific committee, elected by some 300 societies of various countries and presided over by the famous chemist Ostwald, met in Paris to decide which of the many proposed artificial languages would be best for international communications. After a careful investigation of Esperanto, Neutral, Universal, Novilatin, Langue Bleue and several other systems, the result was unanimously arrived at that none of these languages was quite good enough, but that Esperanto might serve as a basis, provided it were thoroughly modified and improved on certain specially indicated points. A smaller committee was selected to work out the details of this language, which is now before the public in the shape of dictionaries, grammars and readers in eight or nine different languages; the English ones may be had at Brentano's, New York. In spite of the short time this interlanguage (generally called Ido) has existed, it has already gained a great

many adherents among Esperantists as well as among those who had been deterred by many of the forbidding features of that language. Propaganda clubs have sprung up in a great many cities, some old Esperanto periodicals have adopted the new language, and new periodicals have come into existence, while a duly elected academy has charge of the further development of the language.

This may be described as a purified Esperanto, freed from all the arbitrary word-coinages and word-clippings of that language, freed also from its illogical and insufficient rules of word-formation, and last, but not least, from its clumsy alphabet with circumflexes over *c*, *s*, *g* and other letters. (Fancy an international language that can neither be telegraphed, nor printed in every printing office!) From another point of view Ido may be described as a systematic turning to account of everything that is already international in words, derivative endings, etc. Every one can easily master such a language because it is nothing but what has well been termed the "quintessence of European languages." A few lines will enable the reader to compare Esperanto and Ido and to judge for himself with regard to their general character. (In the Esperanto specimen the circumflexed letters have been printed as *ch*, *sh*, etc., according to a practise allowed by Dr. Zamenhof.)

ESPERANTO

Kiam chiuj tiuj, kiuj volas la sukseson de la lingvo internacia, konos chiujn kondiciojn de la problemo, tiam oni konstatos, ke malgrau siaj bonaj ecoj, Esperanto devas ricevi shanghoja, char mankas en ghi multaj radikoj, ne sole por la scienco, la artoj, la profesioj, sed ech por la simplaj bezonoj kaj ideoj de la vivo ordinara.

IDO

Kande omni ti qui volas la suceso di la linguo internaciona, konocos omna kondicioni di l' problemo, lor on konstatos ke malgre sa bona qualesi Esperanto devas ricevar chanji, pro ke mankas en ol multa radiki, ne sole por la cienci, la arti, la profesioni, ma mem por la simpla bezoni ed idei di la vivo ordinara.

OTTO JESPERSEN,
Exchange professor,
Columbia University